(c) if so, to what extent US missile defence programme would help India's defence capabilities;

(d) whether any agreement in this regard was signed between India and US; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

Purchase of Russian aircrafts for defence purpose

1701. SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India propose to acquire Russian aircraft for defence purposes; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Russian aircraft have been in the inventory of the Indian Air Force for almost four decade and different aircraft are procured from time to time as per requirement.

Amount paid for purchase of 10 mirage 2000-H/TH aircrafts

1702. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of money paid for purchase of 10 Mirage 2000-H/TH aircrafts by India;

(b) whether extra money was paid for speares, while this purchase was negotiated;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a Panamian registered firm had filed a suit in Commercial Tribunal of Paris seeking payment from Dassault Aviation on this deal for the services rendered by it in clinching the deal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Due to confidentiality clause in the contract, it is not possible to disclose this information.